

they obliterate the old ones. The old jingle of words no longer wins a response. The doctrine is dead. In 1776 it seemed to every Whig in America that it was a pure axiom to say that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. They clung to this as a sacred dogma for over a hundred years, because it did not affect unfavorably any interest. It is untrue. Governments get their powers from the historical fact of their existence. They are all ephemeral, subject to change. When a change takes place it is controlled by the ideas and interests of the time of change, when the popular element in self-government may be much greater than when the constitution was last previously established. In 1898 the popular will, in the United States, was to take possession of the Philippine Islands and to become rulers there, not ruled, as the fathers were in the colonies of 1776. The great doctrine of the source of due power was quickly trampled under foot. The same fate awaits all the rest of the "great principles." The doctrine that all men are equal is being gradually dropped, from its inherent absurdity, and we may at any time find it expedient to drop the jingle about a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It was only good historically to destroy the doctrine, "Everything for the people ; nothing by them."

166. The French Revolution. The French Revolution was due to the fact that a great change had come about in the distribution of economic power between classes and in the class mores which correspond to economic power. All the political institutions of a modern state are conservative in the sense that they retain and sustain what is and has been, and resist interfer-

ence or change. The historical picture is often such that abuses are maintained and reform seems hopeless, on account of the power of existing institutions and customs and the depth of convictions of social welfare which have become traditional.

The student of the history is led to believe that any reform or revolution, as a dissolution of the inherited system of repression and retention, is worth all that it may cost. Hence some students of history become believers in "revolution" as a beneficent social force or engine. In the case of the French Revolution,